

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 TRSE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 /093 W

-----033274 011717Z /44

P R 011415Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1448

INFO AMEMBASSY COTONOU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION GENEVA

USICA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 2094

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PEPR, GB, DM

SUBJECT: BENINESE SITUATION

REF: LIBREVILLE 2079 AND PREVIOUS (NOTAL)

1. BRIEF ARTICLE IN LIBREVILLE DAILY MORNING AUGUST 1 SAID FIRST BENINESE HAD LEFT OWENO MORNING JULY 31 ABOARD S/S CHRISTIAN VIELJEUX FOR COTONOU. ACCORDING ARTICLE, SHIP CARRIED 468 BENINESE.

2. LIBREVILLE RUMOR CIRCUIT NOW APPARENTLY AWARE OF FRENCH SHIP AND ONE RUMOR HAS IT THAT SHIP HAS NOT YET LFT BECAUSE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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UNCERTAINTY WHETHER THEY WILL BE PERMITTED TO LAND. CHECK OF OWENDO PORT MORNING AUG 1, NONETHELESSN TURNED UP NO SHIP BY THAT NAME OR ANY OTHER FRENCH SHIP CAPABLE OF CARRYING SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF BENINESE. RADIO MORNING AUG 1, HOWEVER, REPORTED THT GOG IS AWAITING REPLY TO MESSAGE SENT BY PRESIDENT BONGO TO COTONOU ASKING THAT BENINESE BE RECEIVED IN BENIN ASAP. IN ADDITION, SAME BROADCAST ADDED ON MORE CATEGORY OF BENINESE WHO WILL BE

PERMITTED REMAIN IN GABON. THUS, IN ADDITION TO POLITICAL REFUGEES AND BENINESE WHO HAVE ACQUIRED GABONESE CITIZENSHIP, THOSE BENINESE WHO ARE IN GABON AS RESULT OF "COLLECTIVE CONVENTION," SUCH AS DOCTORS, TEACHERS AND ENGINEERS, WILL ALSO BE ALLOWED TO STAY.

3. THERE MAY ALSO BE SOME KIND OF ORGANIZED REPATRIATION BY AIR IN OPERATION. EMBOFF VISITING AIRPORT MORNING AUG 1 FOUND AN ESTIMATED 300 BENINESE, MOSTLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN, AND WAS TOLD THEY WERE AWAITING UTA FLIGHT TO LAGOS FOR ONWARD TRANSPORT TO BENIN BY ROAD. ONE UTA FLIGHT REPORTEDLY HAD LEFT EARLIER SAME MORNING APPARENTLY FOR SAME DESTINATION. FRENCH EMOSSY COUNSELLOR, HOWEVER, GAVE US NO INDICATION THAT FLIGHTS WERE VV ORGANIZED AND THOUGHT BENINESE WERE SIMPLY IN PROCESS OF ARRANGING OWN FLIGHTS BACK LOM. WE SHALL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE.

4. MEANWHILE, I RECEIVED CALL FROM MOFA MORNING AUG 1 REQUESTING ME TO TTND MEETING CALLED BY FONMIN BONGO MORNING AUG 2. APPARENTLY ALL LOCAL CHIEFS OF MISSION ARE BEING CONVOKED. SUBJECT ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL BE BENINESE PROBLEM. TIENKEN

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